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**CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S
"VELVET DIVORCE,"
VISEGRAD COHESION, AND
EUROPEAN FAULT LINES**

JEFFREY SIMON

NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

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***A popular Government,
without popular information or the means of
acquiring it,
is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or
perhaps both.
Knowledge will forever govern ignorance;
And a people who mean to be their own
Governors,
must arm themselves with the power which
knowledge gives.***

JAMES MADISON to W. T. BARRY
August 4, 1822

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Czechoslovakia's "Velvet Divorce," Visegrad Cohesion, and European Fault Lines

JEFFREY SIMON

The separation of the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic (CSFR) into the Czech Republic and Slovakia on 1 January 1993 did not just draw a new state boundary at the Moravian-Slovak border. The psychological and regional security implications of the split are much greater: it has caused realignment in Central Europe. New borders have caused the Czech Republic to turn westward, weakening the Visegrad Group and creating the potential for isolating Slovakia with reverberations extending to Ukraine.

Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary created the Visegrad triangle on 15 February 1991 to demonstrate the ability of the three to overcome historical differences and to coordinate their eventual "return to Europe."¹ This was to be achieved by joining Western institutions such as the European Community (EC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).²

During most of 1990, 74 percent of the CSFR's 2,141-mile border was with then Warsaw Pact allies Poland (813 miles) and East Germany (285 miles) in the north, Hungary (420 miles) in the south, and the Soviet Union (61 miles)

in the east. Between East and West it shared borders with the core of both alliances' Central Regions; the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany (221 miles).³ CSFR Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier argued that Czechoslovakia's role was to cooperate within the triangle and to act as a "bridge" between West and East. This policy remained in force through the fall of 1991.

Geopolitical Transformation

The geopolitical situation was radically altered by the unification of Germany on 3 October 1990, the final withdrawal of the Soviet Central Group of Forces from Czechoslovakia in June 1991, the termination of the Warsaw Pact on 1 July 1991, and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union at the end of 1991. Germany's unification had significant ramifications for the CSFR. The German Democratic Republic disappeared, expanding the CSFR's border with NATO Germany to 506 miles; and, as a result of the Four-plus-Two Agreement, the CSFR could now anticipate the withdrawal of the Western Group of Soviet Forces from Germany by 1994. The final withdrawal of the Soviet military from Czechoslovakia and formal termination of the Warsaw Pact on 1 July 1991 gave the CSFR a new sense of independence. The disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of successor states—Russia (Kaliningrad), Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine—on the borders of the Visegrad triangle; Czechoslovakia now had only Ukraine as a neighbor from the former Soviet Union. The confidence of Czechoslovakia and its Visegrad triangle counterparts was bolstered, and they began to push harder in their shift westward.

The June 1992 CSFR elections paradoxically created the

preconditions for the "velvet divorce."⁴ The key dimension of the dispute was not nationalistic, but economic. It related to economic equality and inequality in both republics where, coincidentally, the same opinion dominated; that federation was unprofitable.⁵ After deciding that a national plebiscite was unnecessary, the new Czech republic and Slovak republic governments decided to draw a new state border between the CSFR's Moravian and Slovakian republics. On 1 January 1993 two new states—the Czech Republic and Slovakia—were created; and the Visegrad Triangle became the Visegrad Group.

FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC. The regional and political implications of the split have been dramatic for the Czech Republic. From Prague's perspective, the Czech Republic's ties to the West have been significantly enhanced. Now 62 percent of its 1,300-mile border is with German-speaking Europe; it shares 806 miles with (unified) Germany and Austria.⁶ Its borders with Visegrad allies have been reduced greatly, to 34 percent; its border with Poland has been halved to 440 miles, and its border with Hungary no longer exists. On its eastern frontier, Slovakia now provides the Czech Republic with a 200-mile *buffer* with Ukraine.

The Czech Republic's external regional environment provides the necessary stability for the economic, political, and social changes on its agenda. In addition, the Czech Republic does not have to face the internal problem of large ethnic minorities; Slovaks constitute its largest minority, numbering only 100,000 (about 1 percent) of its 10.3 million population at the time of independence.

Freed of the economic millstone of Slovakia, the Czech Republic's economy is now more advanced than its Visegrad neighbors. Although the Czech Republic's trade declined by 8.8 billion koruny (Kcs) with Slovakia in the

first five months of 1993, Czech exports to other markets rose by Kcs 11.5 billion. Two of the Czech Republic's biggest companies have signed agreements with top German groups. With an expected turnover of \$200 million in 1995, AEG-Westinghouse has joined with CKD of Prague (AEG-CKD Transport Systems) to build trams for Western and Eastern markets. Skoda Pilsen has teamed with Siemens to build steam turbines and has recently formed a consortium to resume arms production for the domestic market and export.⁷

In the first quarter of 1993, the Czech Republic attracted about \$300 million in foreign investment, raising its total since 1990 to \$1.86 billion.⁸ In the largest investment in the region, Volkswagen A.G. acquired the Skoda automobile plant in 1991. By the end of the decade, the German auto maker plans to invest nearly \$5 billion and double annual production to 450,000 automobiles.⁹

As a result, Prague feels geographically and psychologically more distant from its Visegrad allies and the East and economically, socially, and politically closer to the West.

FOR SLOVAKIA. The implications of the split have been equally dramatic for Slovakia. Ninety percent of Slovakia's 1,000-mile boundary is still with Visegrad members to the north, south, and west; with Poland (375 miles), Hungary (420 miles), and the Czech Republic (100 miles). To the east Slovakia still borders Ukraine (61 miles); and its only window to the West, a mere 60 miles (6 percent), is neutral Austria.

Before the divorce, Slovak nationalists argued that most of their products were sold to the Czech Republic and that with independence Slovakia would be able to sell more of its products abroad. In addition, they argued that since only 10 percent of foreign investment in Czechoslovakia went to

Slovakia, that with independence this influx would increase. But with independence neither came to pass. During the first five months of 1993 two-way trade between the two republics had declined by 40 percent and the slowdown in Western Europe has made Slovakia's expansion into Western markets more difficult. This is the case particularly for Slovakia because it lacks the flexibility to seek new markets for its more limited range of products¹⁰ and its only direct overland contact with Western markets is across its short border with Austria. Since 1990 the total foreign investment in Slovakia has been only \$231 million, and since independence Slovakia has received little new foreign investment.¹¹

Slovakia retains most of the former CSFR's military industrial base and large reservoirs of unemployment. Bratislava no longer receives economic subsidies from Prague. Ever since independence, Slovakia's economy has declined, unemployment has increased,¹² and political support for Vladimir Meciar and his government has continued to erode.

But if, as is likely, Slovakia, which faces many of the same economic problems as Ukraine, fails to attract new Western investments and markets and continues to decline economically, it will be frustrated by the unfulfillment of its post-independence expectations. If Slovak leaders resort to Slovak nationalist rhetorical exhortation, ethnic tensions are likely to result among Slovakia's heterogeneous Magyar, Gypsy,¹³ and numerous other national minorities,¹⁴ which constitute between 18 percent and 25 percent of Slovakia's 5.27 million population.

As a result of the split, Bratislava feels more isolated from the West and more dependent on its Visegrad allies. Slovakia's geography, economy, and ethnic heterogeneity

resemble Europe's eastern and southern security environment more closely than those of the West.

Diverging Security Concerns

In the aftermath of the divorce, the Czech Republic and Slovakia have reached different conclusions regarding regional security. Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus has concluded that the Czech Republic's new-found relative economic advantage gives Prague the means to join Western institutions—European Community—Western European Union (WEU) and NATO—more rapidly. Hence, he sees continued multilateral Visegrad cooperation with Poland and Hungary as a drag on that process; a perspective that applies even more to less developed Slovakia.

In addition, the willingness of the Czech Republic (and Poland) to act as a sieve for Germany, filtering out would-be emigrants from the Balkans and the former Soviet Union *before* they reach Germany's own borders, has turned the Czech-Slovak border into a new West-East dividing line.¹⁵ A reinforced border has significant psychological significance; it marks the limit of the Czech Republic's exposure to the East while making Slovakia a mere appendix of Western Europe. Slovakia's eastern border is joined to economically distressed Ukraine and linked via the Danube to the unstable Balkans. In sum, the reinforced Czech-Slovak border has the potential to reduce Slovakia to a second division of former Communist Eastern Europe.

In marked contrast to Dienstbier's notion of the CSFR cooperating with Visegrad neighbors and building bridges between West and East, the new Czech Republic strategy is to seek the most rapid integration possible with the West, to downplay multilateral Visegrad cooperation with Poland

and Hungary, and to turn its back to Slovakia.

Slovakia, on the other hand, has two competing security visions. A "western" vision, represented by recently sacked Foreign Minister Milan Knazko, wants Slovakia to continue in the Visegrad Group because it sees that group as the main instrument to anchor Slovakia to the West by joining NATO and, at the same time, to counteract the eastern tug of Ukraine, which is also seeking ties to the West. A competing "eastern" security vision sees Slovakia as a "bridge" between West and East, calls for a "balanced policy" stressing the significance of contacts with Ukraine, rejects the idea of Slovakia's joining NATO, and recommends "neutrality." This vision would result in placing Slovakia's security hostage to Ukrainian developments.

VISEGRAD COOPERATION. The ability of the Slovak government to accommodate the specific interests of its ethnic minorities to Slovak national interests, and to incorporate them into Slovak state interests, will be one of the Slovak government's major challenges. This is particularly the case for its 600,000 to 700,000 Magyar minority, 11 percent to 13 percent of Slovakia's population. Such tensions are likely to exacerbate Slovakia's relations with Hungary and further undermine Visegrad cooperation.

Slovakia's relations with Hungary contain several sensitive issues. These include: first, Slovak worries over possible Hungarian efforts to seek revisions in the borders created by the 1920 Treaty of Trianon which reduced Hungary to its present size. For a thousand years, Slovaks lived in what was Upper Hungary within the larger Hungarian kingdom and were later incorporated into the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A revision of Trianon threatens Slovakia's new-found "national" statehood.

Second, the dispute over the Gabčíkovo Dam on the

Danube River border complements ethnic suspicions. Although the Gabčíkovo Dam issue is at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, it will take years for a ruling. In the meantime, Hungary claims that altering the flow of the Danube will change the frontier to Slovakia's advantage. Slovakia has alleged that Budapest has encouraged ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia to protest and hamper development of the dam.¹⁶

Third, the status of Slovak minorities in Hungary and more numerous Magyar minorities in Slovakia poses a special problem. On one hand, Mečiar, a fervent nationalist, has accused Hungarians of subversion for seeking autonomy for the three regions in southern Slovakia where Hungarians are in majority. On the other hand, the new Slovak Constitution, stresses "national rights" rather than citizen rights. Despite its proclaimed adherence to democracy, the Constitution comes closer to raw majoritarianism, giving little attention to national minorities. Its references to the Slovak "Nation" rather than Slovak citizens feeds the anxiety of Slovakia's Hungarian minority. Fourth, Slovaks appear concerned about what they see as a "feverish military build-up" in Hungary. Recently this issue was aggravated by Hungary's decision to acquire \$800 million-worth of MiG-29s from Russia.¹⁷ In turn, Slovakia has decided to buy some more MiG-29s from Russia.

This problem is exacerbated in part because the Czech Republic inherited better military facilities than Slovakia. This occurred because during the Warsaw Pact era the Czech Republic bordered the Federal Republic of Germany, and most CSFR and Central Group of Forces were deployed west along the German border. Slovakia, well behind the German border, inherited poor military facilities and air fields. In addition, Slovakia has had to start from scratch;

it must build a defense ministry in Bratislava and Military Command in Trencin, as well as develop a new military organization. Slovakia is also behind the Czech Republic in that it also lacks an air defense system.

Although both countries started with Russian military equipment, each country has made initial decisions that may further differentiate them in the future. The Czech Republic has decided not to use its Russian hard currency credit to buy Russian military equipment; instead, it will seek subsidized pricing of oil and natural gas. In marked contrast, Slovakia, has decided to use some of its hard currency credit to buy Russian military equipment (specifically MiG-29s).

Even if Slovakia does not experience economic downturn as expected, Visegrad multilateral cooperation is complicated because of Prague's bolt Westward and mutual suspicions between Bratislava and Budapest. For Slovakia (and the Central European region) this could precipitate an "identity-crisis" in both national and international terms. Slovakia's potential lack of economic viability at a time when it is attempting to build a market economy will undermine its political stability while it is trying to create new political institutions. All this is occurring while Slovakia is attempting to forge a new national political identity, which can irritate ethnic relations within the new state. If Slovakia's perceived regional role does not come to fruition because the Visegrad Group ceases to play a unifying and stabilizing role, Slovakia may feel abandoned and cast adrift.

EASTERN IMPLICATIONS. To the extent the Visegrad Group loses effectiveness, Slovakia will lose its "perceived" role as providing Ukraine with a point of entry to the West. This may be more important for Slovakia than Ukraine, which

also has Poland and Hungary as links to the West. Without Visegrad, Slovakia's security also will become increasingly hostage to relationships outside its control, specifically Ukrainian-Russian and internal Ukrainian relations. Correspondingly, Slovakia will lose the psychological and physical security accrued from Visegrad's multilateral forms of cooperation and its ties to the West.

Not only would the disintegration of the Visegrad Group "close" off a multilateral anchor providing potential entry for Slovakia and Ukraine to the West, it would also cast them adrift and make them increasingly hostage to Russia. Movement in this direction has been inadvertently exacerbated by past U.S. efforts to support the USSR's center (Mikhail Gorbachev) and by continuing U.S. efforts to pursue a Russo-centric policy (Boris Yeltsin)¹⁸; and by the efforts of some Western countries (notably France) to close off entry of Visegrad members into Western institutions.

Indirectly, the effect of these policies has been to alienate Kiev's Western-oriented elite, undermine their domestic legitimacy, and aggravate Russian-Ukrainian relations. Ukraine's Western orientation is evident in the fact that it has either established or is planning cooperative defense agreements with Visegrad members; and that some Kiev officials have expressed a desire to participate in NATO as it provides a "strategic counterweight to Russia in Europe."¹⁹ Second, the degree to which the Ukrainian elite and populace begin to perceive Ukraine's entry to the West being denied, the Western-oriented elite will be undermined and alternate security perspectives will emerge,²⁰ and the internal West-East Ukrainian fault line may deepen as did the Czech-Slovak fault line.

Since Nikita Khrushchev only "granted" the Crimean peninsula to Ukraine as a gesture of good will in 1954 and

as between 80 percent and 85 percent of the population in Ukraine's east is ethnic Russian, it is not inconceivable that this group, sensing weakness of Western Ukrainian leadership, would push for Crimean independence. With support from the Russian Federation pursuing a "near abroad" policy,²¹ Ukraine's 11 million ethnic Russians might push for incorporation of eastern Ukraine into Russia.²² Should such a scenario come to pass, the independence not only of "west" Ukraine but also of "isolated" Slovakia would be endangered.

Thus, Czechoslovakia's "velvet divorce" was effected with unusual civility. Its implications can be expected to reverberate far beyond the redrawing of the Czech and Slovak border, however, creating a series of new alignments and concerns in Central Europe and possibly beyond.

Western Responses to Disintegrating Visegrad Cooperation

If nation-states like the Czech Republic and Slovakia—as well as Poland, Hungary, the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Russia—are going to moderate their antagonisms, old and new, they will have to develop the institutional means to do so. These new nation-states present the West with a major challenge: to develop multilateral decision-making processes that can encompass and moderate diverse interests—and make them adhere to internationally acceptable standards.

The challenge for the West is to help promote stability within the Visegrad states as well as nurture democratic institutions. This problem is complicated not only because of the difficulties within the Visegrad Group, as discussed above, but also because of the European nations' difficulties defining their own post-1989 security institutions. For

example, already struggling with this challenge are such multilateral institutions as the regional Visegrad Group, European EC-WEU, trans-Atlantic NATO-North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), and pan-European Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

THE VISEGRAD GROUP. One of the West's goals should be to prevent the Czech-Slovak border from becoming a new European East-West dividing line; a situation that has become more likely with the need to control emigration from the east. The fate of that border—with all its psychological, economic, political, and security consequences—will be closely connected with developments in Ukraine and Russia. Visegrad cooperation is an important tool to prevent Europe's division along the Czech and Slovak border.

A second goal should be to prevent divergent security perceptions from arising within the group. This is particularly important for two reasons. First, a common Western security focus tends to orient the group to Western institutions and, second, thereby legitimizes Visegrad leaders and reinforces them with compatible economic and political values.

A final goal should be to encourage Visegrad regional cooperation and transparency to prevent ethnic tensions and conflicts and regional arms races. This potential already exists in embryo between Slovakia and Hungary. The aim would be a regional system of collective security, working closely with the main Western collective security structures—notably EC-WEU, NATO-NACC, and CSCE.

Slovakia has potential for becoming a major actor in developing different forms of regional cooperation in Central Eastern Europe. Slovakia's central location—it is the only Visegrad group member that borders all the other

members—makes its role or responsibilities crucial for the development of the Visegrad Group. If the West will not or cannot provide real security guarantees to the Visegrad Group or to Slovakia within the group because of its relative "backwardness," it should at least work to support regional military and security cooperation among these countries *as a group* and gradually help them to develop closer links with NATO and WEU.

If admission of Visegrad countries to Western security structures such as WEU or NATO ultimately is given serious consideration, the timing of the four countries' admission should not be significantly differentiated. Sequential admission of all or some of the four over a long period of time would likely undermine Visegrad Group cooperation. An elongated, differentiated admission policy would heighten existing differences among the group and could "alienate" precisely those members whose behavior the West may most want to influence or moderate. Within the group it would most likely result in the isolation of Slovakia. If the Czech Republic were permitted to enter Western security structures before Slovakia, the resulting East-West line would further distance and isolate Ukraine, making it hostage to events in Russia.

Multilateral Visegrad cooperation is more advantageous than bilateral cooperation among Visegrad members because of the "peer pressure" effect in moderating potential cleavages. Visegrad economic and political cooperation tends to stabilize the region by moderating potential ethnic tensions and cross-border suspicions. Multilateral Visegrad cooperation also provides the group with "equal" access to West Europe (EC-WEU and NATO) and contributes to the group's "equal" importance to Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Lithuania for access to the West.

In sum, the goal of U.S. bilateral and multilateral EC-WEU, NATO-NACC, and CSCE institutional policy should be to encourage multilateral Visegrad cooperation and to guard against the pursuit of policies that differentiate and inadvertently divide group members by turning them into competitors. To achieve this end, a key challenge will be to employ Western multilateral institutions so that they interact positively and are, indeed, inter-locking. In the past they have failed by leading to the perception that they are "inter-blocking."

THE EUROPEAN EC-WEU. The European Community is a clear model of European integration. Since the Visegrad Group's 6 October 1991 declaration of its desire to join the EC,²³ the four have signed agreements of association.²⁴ Hence, the EC plays an essential economic and political role in assisting in stabilizing the Visegrad region.

On the security side, the December 1991 Maastricht summit has clarified the role of the Western European Union as a bridge between the European Community and NATO. The Community confirmed the WEU's dual commitment to embody the European defense identity and to serve as the European pillar of the NATO Alliance. It agreed to broaden the nine-member WEU to include the other EC member states and the other European allies as members.

In addition, in June 1992, the WEU Council of Ministers met in Bonn and decided to make the WEU more operational by planning humanitarian, peacekeeping, and peace-making tasks (Petersberg Declaration). They also decided to create a Forum of Consultation to "enhance" WEU's relations with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and the three Baltic States. A second WEU ministerial level meeting convened in Rome in May

1993 to discuss developing relations with the European Community and the situation in former Yugoslavia.

Unlike NATO's North Atlantic Cooperation Council, WEU relations are differentiated with countries that are developing association links with the European Community. While the WEU Forum of Consultation may play an important role in facilitating the Visegrad Group's adherence to European institutions, it has the potentially deleterious effect of isolating the former Soviet Union (except the Baltic states) from Europe and could develop a significant European fault line. One means to circumvent these problems is to acknowledge the significance of the EC economic role by giving the WEU observer status in NATO-NACC. Thereby, the NACC could be used as an effective device to link NATO to the European Community, and the Community to its former adversaries.²⁵

In this regard, one of the European Community's major roles toward the East is not necessarily to provide membership, but instead to make an economic commitment that these countries will gain access to its expanding markets by a set date.²⁶ Lack of access has been a constant stumbling block and irritant for the Visegrad Group. Tensions and disagreements have arisen over agricultural and steel imports as well as banking, insurance, and real estate markets. Expanded EC markets would enhance not only foreign investment and economic development in the East, but also Western-oriented political leaders and political stability.

In sum, to overcome "divisive" WEU security functions, it could be given observer status on the NACC. The European Community could play its greatest role economically by opening its markets to Visegrad. By doing so, it would serve as an example to countries farther to the south and east—Bulgaria, Romania, the Balts, Ukraine, and Rus-

sia—that regional cooperation can pay off.

THE TRANS-ATLANTIC NATO-NACC. As the Visegrad countries have made NATO membership a priority,²⁷ NATO appears to enjoy great prestige and influence with these countries. NATO's great advantage is that it commits the United States and Canada to maintaining stability in Europe. At the same time it is the only organization that possesses the necessary military bases, communications, equipment, and armed forces. A major change occurred in November 1991, when the Rome summit adopted a New Strategic Concept which moved NATO's emphasis away from massive mobilization toward enhanced crisis-management capabilities.

NATO is also attempting to facilitate the emergence of a European pillar. To do this, marginalization of Alliance members that are not part of the European Community or WEU must be prevented. Hence, regular contacts between NATO and WEU are being established and deepened. A significant move in this direction occurred on 8 June 1993 when a joint session of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and WEU Council reviewed embargo operations in the Adriatic since July 1992. The Councils approved a combined NATO-WEU concept of operations, which included a single command and control arrangement for combined NATO-WEU operations under the authority of both organizations' councils. Operational control of the combined NATO-WEU Task Force was delegated through NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) to the Commander Allied Naval Forces Southern Europe (COMNAVSOUTH).

Aside from these adaptations, NATO has begun to reach out to the East. The process began with the July 1990 London Declaration which extended its "hand of friendship" and invited former Warsaw Pact members "to establish

regular diplomatic liaison with NATO." The June 1991 Copenhagen North Atlantic Council furthered this process by agreeing to use NATO to intensify military contacts with the East. The 20 December 1991 establishment of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council provided an important instrument to address European security. A Work Plan was approved at a 10 March 1992 extraordinary NACC meeting, which convened to admit the former Soviet republics (except Georgia); and on 1 April 1992 NATO-NACC defense ministers (minus France) created a Group on Defense Matters (GDM) to act as a clearing house for proposals for defense cooperation.

Following the June 1992 NAC Foreign Ministers session, which agreed "to support on a case-by-case basis in accordance with their own procedures, peacekeeping activities under the responsibility of CSCE,"²⁸ NATO moved "out of area" and with the WEU dispatched naval units to the Adriatic to enforce the UN embargo. The NACC also agreed to contribute its forces to peacekeeping operations in partnership with NATO. Of the Visegrad Group, Polish and Czechoslovak units joined the forces of other nations as observers under the UN flag in Croatia. Hungary, fearing reverberations for its large Magyar minority in Serbia's Vojvodina, initially was more cautious, but in October 1992 decided to allow NATO AWACS aircraft monitoring Bosnia to overfly Hungarian territory.²⁹

The December 1992 NAC Ministerial noted the Alliance's readiness "to support peacekeeping operations under the authority of the UN Security Council."³⁰ In a parallel effort, the December 1992 NACC meeting produced agreement that NATO and cooperation partners would share experience with one another and with other CSCE states in planning and preparing peacekeeping missions and would

consider possible joint peacekeeping training and exercises. The same NACC also approved a 1993 Work Plan that included specific provisions on peacekeeping and subsequently created a NACC Ad Hoc Group on Cooperation in Peacekeeping to discuss general political and conceptual principles and practical measures for cooperation.

Closer cooperation and confidence among NACC partners was made evident in late February 1993 when the Military Committee met for the first time in cooperation session and Hungary authorized overflight of its territory to U.S. Hercules aircraft dropping relief supplies over Bosnia.³¹ When NACC defense ministers met at the end of March 1993, they recognized the increased importance "of the ability to act in a cooperative framework" in peacekeeping tasks and "ensure[d] that a high priority be given this work."³²

On 12 April 1993, under authority of UN Resolution 816, NATO started the operation of its no-fly zone enforcement over Bosnia-Herzegovina. In late April, the Military Committee again met in cooperation with Chiefs of Defense Staff to discuss the possibility of NATO intervention in Bosnia should a peaceful solution fail. For Hungary, the possibility of intervention renewed feelings of being threatened and again raised the question of NATO security guarantees in case of Serbian reprisals. Although NATO denied the Hungarian request, Foreign Minister Jeszenszky confirmed that NATO's AWACS contributed to Hungary's security.³³

The June 1993 Athens NACC adopted the Ad Hoc Group's detailed Report on Cooperation in Peacekeeping³⁴ and agreed to accelerate the Ad Hoc Group's practical cooperation to implement the program, including the sharing of experience in peacekeeping planning, training

and exercises, and logistics.³⁵ As a result of the Athens NACC session, Prague hosted a high-level NACC seminar on peacekeeping from 30 June to 2 July to discuss conceptual and doctrinal issues of peacekeeping. In addition to cooperation partners, European neutrals—Austria, Finland, and Sweden—also participated.³⁶

In summary, the situation in former Yugoslavia has renewed insecurities and instabilities in Central Europe and has required NATO to evolve in ways unforeseen a few years ago. In contrast to simple expansion of membership, NATO's broadening has been occurring in new ways. For example, the NATO-NACC has been described as providing a pool of resources as a sort of "Security International Monetary Fund."³⁷ NATO-NACC could develop in the security field something similar to the reserve fund maintained by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for its members. In the same vein, General James McCarthy, former Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command has suggested that NACC could establish sets of NACC-funded and maintained peacekeeping equipment, along the lines of prepositioned equipment sets (POMCUS).³⁸

Peacekeeping planning, exercises, and operations are also a basis for military cooperation that, while not providing Article 5 security guarantees, could enhance regional stability and security. In addition, while NACC does not provide the desired security guarantees, it could act as a transitional framework for eventual Alliance membership.³⁹

THE PAN-EUROPEAN CSCE. The CSCE has an important role to play in moderating ethnic conflict and in setting codes of conduct. Since the 1975 Helsinki Summit, CSCE was mostly process. The 19–20 November 1990 Paris Summit began CSCE's institutionalization. It created the CSCE

Secretariat (Prague), Office for Free Elections (Warsaw) subsequently renamed Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), and Conflict Prevention Center (Vienna). In addition, the Paris Summit established a three-tiered system of consultation; CSCE heads of state meeting every two years, foreign affairs ministers every year, and a Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) several times a year.

The 10 July 1992 Helsinki Summit document, *The Challenges of Change* was part of an effort to develop CSCE structures to manage crises and create instruments of conflict prevention and crisis management.⁴⁰ The summit leaders acknowledged a role for the CSCE in peacekeeping and adopted a set of principles governing CSCE operations, including the potential use of the resources of the European Community, WEU, and NATO.

CSCE institutionalization was further fostered in December 1992 when its Council, meeting in Stockholm, established a High Commissioner for National Minorities to provide "early warning [and] early action"⁴¹ on ethnic minority tensions that could develop into conflict within the CSCE area. The Council also established the Vienna Group of senior diplomats (who meet weekly), decided to make CSCE a U.N. Chapter VIII regional arrangement, and agreed to create a Secretary General.

In effect, the 1992 decisions led CSCE away from the 1975 Helsinki Final Act's principles guiding relations *between* states to enter the area of conflict "within" participating states.⁴² Now CSCE peacekeeping could focus on intra-state conflict where at least one party to a conflict was not a political entity recognized by the CSCE as a participating state. All of these decisions have made the CSCE the main forum for pan-European consultation and crisis mana-

gement. The importance of CSCE has increased as the standard bearer of democratic legitimacy and for resolving ethnic issues within and between multinational states and neighbors; such as in the former Yugoslavia, or Slovakia and Romania with neighboring Hungary, or in the former Soviet Union.

These developments are particularly significant in light of the NATO-NACC decisions and activities during 1992 to carry out functions under either CSCE or U.N. mandate; and during 1993 to develop a multinational peacekeeping capability that would include not just cooperation partners, but also neutrals such as Austria, Finland, and Sweden. In this sense, the NATO-NACC pan-European pretensions are its strength—compared to the narrower WEU Consultative Forum. NATO could be further strengthened if it gained permanent observer status in the CSO of the CSCE and representation on the CSO Working Group in Vienna where preparations are made.⁴³

What Is to Be Done?

The West faces multiple challenges. First, we must prevent nascent fault lines from developing into fissures as they have in the former Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Second, we are faced with the task of legitimizing democratic leaders in the new states in Europe, and by doing so, helping to legitimize their political, economic, and social programs.

Although the division of the CSFR into two separate states has proceeded with unusual civility thus far, the future regional security implications may be quite significant, and not necessarily all positive. For Europe, the division exaggerates the economic, political, psychological,

and social inequalities between the Czech Republic and Slovakia. By doing so, the division has tended to encourage competition and undermine cooperation within the Visegrad Group.⁴⁴

If Slovakia is not allowed to participate fully in the Visegrad Group and provide a political, economic, and social bridge to Ukraine,⁴⁵ thereby facilitating the evolution of a united Europe, then the velvet divorce risks dividing Slovakia and Ukraine from the West. Such an East-West division must be discouraged, and Western institutions—notably EC and NATO—should engage in a coordinated policy to facilitate Visegrad Group cooperation and their "return to Europe."

The CSCE, as a U.N. Chapter VIII regional arrangement, has become the pan-European political forum that legitimizes sanctions, military actions, or both. For Visegrad, in particular, CSCE has been a useful instrument for focusing attention on ethnic issues and thereby moderating regional tensions.⁴⁶ CSCE's institutionalization and more recent evolution of ties with NATO-NACC have enhanced its significance, particularly for Visegrad.

The NATO-NACC remains a particularly good forum for military-political entry for Visegrad because of its: (1) trans-Atlantic ties, which provide psychological security to the East; (2) broader eastern cooperation partnership, which has the effect of uniting, rather than dividing Europe; and (3) recent tendencies to become more pan-European, by participating with neutrals such as Austria, Finland, and Sweden. In addition, NATO-NACC has expanded its ties to the WEU operationally, has actively moved into peacekeeping planning, and remains the Visegrad Group's security institution of choice.

The European Community furnishes Visegrad with its

economic-political entry point to Europe. By providing investment sources, expanded and predictable markets, and a projected date of entry, the Community can greatly enhance the Visegrad Groups's economic and political stability. The risk of having the WEU play a role of dividing Europe can be obviated by shifting focus to the NACC, which is gaining pan-European tendencies. Shifting the burden might be made politically palatable and achievable by giving the WEU observer status in the NACC.

The United States, with a major interest in European security and a role in Visegrad stability, must take into account all the issues mentioned above. First, it is the U.S. military presence and commitment to remain engaged that provides psychological security to the Visegrad Group. The U.S. presence helps make NATO-NACC the Visegrad Group's security institution of choice.

Second, the United States should make every effort to ensure that European institutions are complementary (inter-locking) rather than competitive (inter-blocking). In this regard one of the most urgent tasks is to ensure that the relationship between the United States and European Community and between NATO and the WEU develops smoothly and cooperatively.

While this has already begun to proceed with NATO's command of the Eurocorps in certain contingencies and with operational control of peacekeeping operations, further efforts can and should be made with the WEU's Consultative Forum and NACC—perhaps along the line of giving the WEU observer status on the NACC. This would help to reduce confusion and apparent competition between WEU and NATO toward the East. In the same vein, the regularized consultations between the United States and the European Commission should be widened to permit the

United States to participate in the discussions of the European Council.

Third, the United States should make every effort to foster the continuation of Visegrad Group cooperation, instead of responding to individual member needs that might further differences and foster competition. To this end, the United States should make every effort to deal with the Visegrad Group *as a group*, as it did with the 1992 Air Space Management Conference in Stuttgart and has done with professional military education programs. It should continue a non-differentiated policy toward the Visegrad Group in Alliance policy. In other words, the United States should discourage the Czech Republic's efforts to "bolt" from the group and to acquire early admission or other differentiated status.

The United States and NATO-NACC can play a major role in assisting the Czech Republic and Slovakia's civil-military development. First, both need assistance in developing and deepening civilian control of the military. Since 1 January 1993, both states have returned to the 1989 time-frame in regard to legislative-executive (defense ministry) relations. Since neither state parliament emerged from the previous federal parliament, their defense and security committees are entirely new. The earlier republican parliaments had no similar counterparts. In addition, all the key civilians in the Czech defense ministry are new, with little or no military experience; and the Slovaks must not only create a new defense ministry in Bratislava, but also a Military Command Headquarters in Trencin.⁴⁷ Both states need assistance in civilian-military relations, and Slovakia needs assistance in constitutional development, notably on the question of citizen rights in a multi-ethnic state.

Second, both states have participated in the U.N. Protective Force (UNPROFOR) actions and have consciously developed force structures to deal with peacekeeping activities. The United States can assist in their development either bilaterally or through NACC and thereby facilitate further participation by the Czechs and Slovaks in European structures. The Czech Republic's interest was evidenced by the July 1993 Prague-sponsored NACC conference on peacekeeping doctrine and planning. The United States will sponsor a follow-up NACC conference on peacekeeping operations in November 1993.

The United States might use international military educational-training and military-to-military contacts to assist the Czechs and Slovaks in developing a compatible peacekeeping capability. In fact, the United States might do this at an all-Visegrad level on the 1992 air space-management model. This could be done within NATO-NACC by first evolving joint peacekeeping military exercises and procedures. Then perhaps a NATO-NACC Security "IMF pool" of resources could be developed or POMCUS sets of peacekeeping equipment to enhance compatibility and cooperation between NATO members and cooperation partners.

Clearly, the Czech Republic and Slovakia need great assistance. The United States, in particular, should use its resources and influence to encourage Visegrad's cooperative efforts and to facilitate the group's adherence (as a group) to Western institutions. By creating a sea of stability and cooperation in Europe's center, a "bridge" (not barrier) will be built to Europe's south and east—to Bulgaria, Romania, the Baltic states, Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. Only by pursuing and coordinating a policy with the Western

Allies that encourages and rewards cooperation over competition can the United States ensure its Cooperation Partners' safe "return to Europe." This course would discourage European fault lines from evolving into new fissures.

NOTES

1. On 25–26 January 1990 Czechoslovakia's President Vaclav Havel visited Hungary and Poland and called on all three countries to coordinate their "return to Europe." In October 1990 deputy defense ministers and deputy foreign ministers met to coordinate policy. On 15 February 1991 presidents Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa and Prime Minister Jozsef Antall met in Visegrad, Hungary to determine forms of "triangle" cooperation.

2. For a summary, see Joshua Spero, "The Budapest-Prague-Warsaw Triangle: Central European Security After the Visegrad Summit," *European Security*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 58–83.

3. The CSFR also bordered neutral Austria (341 miles).

4. In Slovakia the 1992 elections gave a parliamentary majority to parties that spearheaded the dismantling of the common state whose continued existence was supported by a majority of Slovaks. Martin Butora and Zora Butorova, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 4, no. 2 (April 1993), pp. 78–80.

5. In the Czech Republic, 55 percent of those polled believed they subsidized Slovakia. In Slovakia, 73 percent believed that the Czech Republic gained advantage from union. See Ivan Gabal, "Czechoslovak Public Opinion Perspectives," paper prepared for Eighth Annual Strategic Studies Conference "The Atlantic Community After Communism," Knokke-Heist, Belgium, 23–25 September 1992.

6. The Czechs had been under German influence since the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 until the Czechoslovak state was created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.

7. Anthony Robinson, "Breaking Up Was the Easy Part," *Financial Times*, 6 August 1993, p. 11.

8. Peter Maass, "After the Civil Divorce," *Washington Post*, 10 August 1993, p. A12.

9. Between April and December 1991, Volkswagen lost \$31 million on sales of \$544 million. In 1992 it turned a profit on sales of \$1.1 billion. Richard W. Stevenson, "In a Czech Plant, VW Shows How to Succeed in the East," *New York Times*, 22 June 1993, pp. A1,D6.

10. European Community restrictions on steel imports have hit one of Slovakia's most efficient enterprises, the East Slovakian Steel Works (VSZ) at Kosice, which accounts for almost 20 percent of Slovakia's exports. Anthony Robinson, "Slovak PM Personifies Republic's Image Problems," *Financial Times*, 12 August 1993, p. 11.

11. Two-thirds of the \$231 million was invested in Bratislava, probably because of its proximity to Vienna. Slovakia's three major sources of capital were Austria (27.3 percent of all investment), Germany (24.2 percent) and the United States (19.9 percent), which provided the largest single investment (K-Mart). In contrast to the Czech Republic (which opposes tax breaks for foreigners), on 5 April 1993 Slovakia announced a tax break for foreigners. See Sharon Fisher, "Economic Developments in the Newly Independent Slovakia," *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 30 (23 July 1993), p. 45.

12. After shrinking by 2.5 percent in 1990, 15.8 percent in 1991, and 6 percent in 1992, the Slovak economy was showing signs of recovery at the time of the split. Separation brought further difficulties for the Slovak economy, which is expected to decline by between 2 percent and 15 percent in 1993. In contrast the Czech Republic is expected to exhibit small growth. Between 31 December 1992 and 31 March 1993 Slovak unemployment increased from 10.4 percent to 12.01 percent. See Sharon Fisher, *ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

13. Estimates vary greatly on Slovakia's Romany population. Of Slovakia's 5,268,935 March 1991 Census population, estimates vary between 250,000 to 500,000 Gypsies; between 4.7 percent to 9.5 percent of the population. Vasil Hudak, "East-Central Europe and the Czech and Slovak Republics in a New Security Environment," *European Security*, vol. 1, no. 4 (Winter 1992), p. 141.

14. A total of about 100,000 other national minorities—Czechs, Ukrainians, Ruthenians, Poles, and others—live in Slovakia.
15. It also has the effect of establishing a similar dividing line at Poland's eastern border with Ukraine, Belarus, Kaliningrad (Russia), and Lithuania.
16. James Wyllie, "The Hungarian Question—Mutual Concerns and Suspicions," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol. 5, no. 6 (June 1993), p. 259.
17. Hungary acquired 28 MiG-29s. See Alfred A. Reisch, "Hungary, Russian MiG-29s, and the Regional Balance of Power," *RFE/RL Weekly Report*, 7 July 1993, pp. 2–3.
18. William Bodie makes the point that the West should rid itself of the illusion that the CIS will ever serve as the functional equivalent of the USSR; that the other republics view it as an entity whose usefulness has passed. William C. Bodie, "Anarchy and Cold War in Moscow's 'Near Abroad'," *Strategic Review*, vol. 21, no. 1 (Winter 1993), p. 50.
19. Aleksandr Goncharenko, Oleg Bodrug, and Eduard Lisitsyn, "Possible Ways of Safeguarding Ukraine's National Security," *Narodnaya Armiya*, pt. 1 (29 July 1992), p. 2. *FBIS-USR-92-118* (16 September 1992), p. 53.
20. In Spring 1993 a Ukrainian initiative proposed the creation of a security zone that would include the Visegrad Group, three Baltic states, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova, but excluded Russia. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic distanced themselves from the Ukrainian initiative. See Alfred A. Reisch, "Central and Eastern Europe's Quest for NATO Membership," *RFE/RL Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 28 (9 July 1993), p. 47.
21. Citing Yevgeny Ambartsumov's idea of a so-called "Monroe Doctrine" in the "Near Abroad" and from Russia's May 1992 Draft Military Doctrine that "A violation of the rights of Russian citizens . . . in the former USSR republics can be a serious source of conflicts,"

Stephen Blank argues this tactic could be used in the Ukraine. Stephen J. Blank, *Russia, Ukraine, and European Security* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, 20 May 1993), pp. 10–12.

22. During 1992 the Crimea was in turmoil due to the Russian Parliament's calls either for Crimean independence or for turning it back to Russia.

23. At the second Visegrad summit in Krakow, Poland, Havel, Walesa, and Antall signed the "Krakow Declaration" on 6 October. It stressed association with the European Community as a priority objective and called for "the speediest conclusion of discussions about associate status in the EC." For text, see *European Security*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 104–08.

24. Agreements were signed on 16 December 1991. Warsaw TVP. *FBIS-EEU-91-242* (17 December 1991), p. 2. After the velvet divorce, the Czechs and Slovaks renegotiated the agreements on 15 June 1993.

25. See Simon Serfaty, "The Challenge of Continuity: Hyperboles, Hysteria, and History," in Jeffrey Simon (ed.), *NATO: The Challenge of Change* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1993), p. 36. He also makes the persuasive argument that the United States is a de facto nonmember of the European Community because its assets and influence are greater than most EC members. He noted the 1991 steps to regularize consultation between the United States and the European Commission and argues that perhaps later in the decade this could be widened to permit U.S. participation in the discussions of the European Council similar to the status given to the President of the EC Commission in the G-7 meetings. *Ibid.*

26. See Simon Serfaty, *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.

27. At the third Visegrad summit held in Prague on 6 May 1992, the communique stressed that NATO and a sustained U.S. presence were of utmost importance for European security; and emphasized their desire to become full members of NATO. See Communique, Budapest MTI 6 May 1992. *FBIS-EEU-92-089* (7 May 1992), p. 3.

28. "Final Communiqué issued by the North Atlantic Council in Ministerial Session," NATO Press Communiqué M-NAC-1 (92) 51, 4 June 1992, p. 4.
29. See Reisch, "Central and Eastern Europe's Quest for NATO membership," p. 47.
30. "Final Communiqué issued by the North Atlantic Council in Ministerial Session," NATO Press Communiqué M-NAC-2(92)106, 17 December 1992, p. 2.
31. At the same time Hungary appointed a colonel as permanent military representative, with the rank of ambassador, to NATO headquarters. Reuters (Brussels), 9 March 1993.
32. "Statement issued by the Meeting of Defense Ministers," NATO Press Communiqué M-DMCP-1(93)28, 29 March 1993, p. 3.
33. Reuters (Brussels), 14 and 17 May 1993.
34. "Report to Ministers by the NACC Ad Hoc Group on Cooperation in Peacekeeping," NATO Press Release M-NACC-1(93)40, 11 June 1993, pp. 8–11.
35. "Statement Issued by the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in Ministerial Session," NATO Press Communiqué M-NACC-1(93)39, 11 June 1993, p. 1.
36. "NACC High Level Seminar on Peacekeeping," NATO Press Release (93)45, 25 June 1993.
37. Michael Ruhle, "NATO's Evolving Role in the New Europe," *European Security*, vol. 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1992), p. 270.
38. James P. McCarthy, "Strengthening Security in Central and Eastern Europe: New Opportunities for NATO," *Strategic Review*, vol. 21, no. 1 (Winter 1993), p. 58.

39. For a discussion of this, see Jeffrey Simon, "Does Eastern Europe Belong In NATO?," *Orbis*, vol. 37, no. 1 (Winter 1993), pp. 21-35.

40. See John Borawski and Macha Khmelevskaja, "The CSCE Helsinki Summit: New Directions for Euro-Atlantic Security," *European Security*, vol. 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1992), pp. 252-61.

41. CSCE Helsinki Documents 1992, p. 9.

42. See Lynn M. Hansen, "The CSCE and United Nations," in Simon, *NATO: The Challenge of Change*, pp. 111-13; 117-18.

43. See Jamie P. Shea, "NATO: Meeting the Challenge of Change," in Simon, *NATO: The Challenge of Change*, pp. 246-47.

44. Since January 1993 Czech Defense Minister Antonin Baudys has missed at least one Visegrad meeting and on 28 March 1993 on the eve of the NACC, said that each of the Visegrad countries should act on its own in striving for possible association with NATO. *RFE/RL Daily Report*, no. 61 (30 March 1993), p. 3.

45. In February 1993 when Polish Defense Minister Janusz Onyszkiewicz met with Ukrainian counterpart Konstantin Morozov in Kiev, he stressed that while Poland was seeking to join the European Community and NATO, it would not turn its back on Ukraine.

46. Poland has turned to CSCE in regard to the plight of ethnic Poles in Lithuania. Hungary has used CSCE to focus attention on the situation of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia.

47. Although the Slovaks must create a new ministry, Slovak defense minister Imrich Andrejcek was a former CSFR vice minister and minister of defense.

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